

Ludwig and Frances Leix House I
1329 3rd Avenue
Fourth Ward Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5819

HABS
PA,
7-ALTO,
60-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
LUDWIG AND FRANCES LEIX HOUSE I

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Location: 1329 3rd Avenue

Date of Erection: by 1876-77

Description: This three-bay, side-gable, brick-veneered dwelling is of a type common to Fourth Ward, but larger and more substantial than its frame counterparts. Two-and-a-half stories in height, the Leix House has its entrance door at right front and an enclosed central chimney. Window surrounds are fairly plain, but an ornamented wood cornice includes carved pedimented caps for the second-floor windows as well as the four standard sets of paired scroll brackets across the front facade. First-floor windows are extra tall with matching inset wood pediments.

Like its neighbor the Schraff House, the Leix House retains its original flat-roofed porch. Sections of spindled frieze end in tracery squares where they join with brackets to four supporting turned balusters. A row of fine sawtooth applique runs beneath the overhanging molded roof edge. Below the porch railing is vertical wood siding. Entrance to the porch is from the right side.

History: Houses that have stayed in one or two families tend to survive more completely intact. Ludwig Leix purchased this property on the corner of 3rd Avenue and 14th Street, a full 50' x 120' lot, from John and Emma Wright on May 27, 1876, for \$600. Ludwig first appeared in tax records in 1877 when he was age 30, married, and a property owner. He earned a living as a blacksmith. His son Louis was listed as a drug clerk living with the family in 1893.

By 1903 the family was prosperous enough to build a double house as a rental property facing 14th Street (210-12 14th St., HABS No. PA-5865) at the rear of the lot. The 1329 3rd Ave. house continued to be the family home.

In 1900, Frances Leix was listed as resident with Annie Leix who worked as a dressmaker out of the family home. Ludwig Leix died on July 11, 1911, leaving the property to Frances.

When she died in 1928, the property became vested in the five Leix children; who moved out of the house and rented it. By 1939, John and Louise P. Hindinger were the tenants; they purchased the house in 1946. By 1948-49 John Hindinger worked as a derrick operator for the PRR.

Sources: Maps: 1882, 1888. Deed books: 35/192, 543/533. City directories. Tax assessment records.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. Overviews of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and the fourth ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5786) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.